

# PRESS RELEASE

## House Armed Services Committee

### Duncan Hunter, Chairman

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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#### OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN DUNCAN HUNTER

##### *Hearing on Operation Iraqi Freedom: The Combatant Commander's Perspective*

Today, the committee will continue its review of the lessons learned from Operation Iraqi Freedom. We are fortunate to have as our witness:

General Tommy Franks, United States Army  
Former Commander, U.S. Central Command

General, on behalf of the Committee, thank you for the years of distinguished service to our country and for leading our young men and women in what can only be judged as a brilliant military campaign.

It has only been a few days since your change-of-command ceremony and I'm sure you're busy preparing for your next career, so we appreciate your ability to make time for us today. We'll need your perspective to help sort through the multiple reports, studies, and presentations that are going to be prepared on Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Defense analysts and special interests are already drawing the battle lines over how to interpret Operation Iraqi Freedom in the debate on military transformation. Advocates of transformation describe the war in Iraq as a validation of every transformational idea that's ever been proposed and view it as a model for all future operations. Others note that legacy forces and capabilities largely won the war and argue that the military isn't broken and doesn't need fixing.

Ultimately, Operation Iraqi Freedom will reveal many lessons about warfare that lie somewhere between the two camps. No one should deny that transformational technologies and capabilities made Operation Iraqi Freedom more decisive and less costly than it might have been. Nor should we forget that victory still required American boots on the ground, armed with the best and most survivable equipment the American people can provide.

General, your thoughts will be vitally important in helping us sort through those two somewhat competing perspectives.

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